

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SNM-02 IO-12 BNDD-05 CIAE-00 INR-09

JUSE-00 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SY-07 TRSE-00 USIA-12 NSC-10

SCI-06 OMB-01 SS-14 AID-20 AGR-20 HEW-08 H-02 RSR-01

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FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6725

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 2460

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR CO

SUBJECT: NARCOTICS CONTROL ACTIVITIES IN COLOMBIA - MARCH 1973

REFS (A) STATE 49396 (B) BOGOTA 2327

1. AMBASSADOR'S VISIT WITH MINISTER OF JUSTICE-- ON MARCH 16 AMBASSADOR ATTENDED MEETING CALLED BY MINISTER OF JUSTICE TO DISCUSS NEW NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT PLAN DEVELOPED BY NATIONAL POLICE. MINISTER INFORMED AMBASSADOR THAT PRESIDENT HAD APPROVED PLAN AND HAD ALLOWED FOUR MILLION PESOS FOR OPERATIONAL EXPENSES. MINISTER ALSO REQUESTED USG ASSISTANCE IN SUPPLYING CERTAIN EQUIPMENT.

2. NARCOTICE PLAN OF OTHER ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES-- DURING MARCH CUSTOMS DEVELOPED AN ACTION PLAN AND DISCUSSIONS ARE PRESENTLY BEING HELD BETWEEN OFFICERS OF THE MISSION AND THAT AGENCY. DEPARTAMENTO ADMINISTRATIVO DE SEGURIDAD (DAS) REQUESTED ASSISTNACE IN DEVELOPING AN ACTION PLAN DURING MARCH AND THE MISSION IS RESPONDING TO THAT REQUEST.

3. VISIT OF INCB STAFF MEMBER-- ON MARCH 1 EMBASSY WAS VISITED BY LUIS MANUECO- JENKINS OF THE INCB STAFF. HE SPOKE WITH CONSUL GENERAL, BNDD, AND CUSTOMS REPS ON MARCH 2 AND DEPARTED FOR WASHINGTON VIA MEXICO ON MARCH 5. HIS COMMENTS ON CONFIDENTIAL

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SITUATION IN COLOMBIA ARE CONTAINED IN REFTEL A.

4. DURING THE EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF THE COLOMBIAN CONGRESS THAT CLOSED ON MARCH 23, THE SENATE APPROVED A NEW DRUG BILL THAT COMPLETELY REVAMPS THE PENAL CODE WITH RESPECT TO NARCOTICS OFFENSES AND PROVIDES MORE SEVERE PANALTIES THAN NOW APPLY. THE MEASURE IS IN COMMITTEE IN THE CHAMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES, WHERE IT WILL BE TAKEN UP WHEN THE REGULAR SESSION OF CONGRESS OPENS ON JULY 20. THE FACT THAT THE BILL DID NOT GET ALL THE WAY THROUGH THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS WAS NOT DUE TO ANY OPPOSITION, BUT RATHER TO LACK OF TIME. THE BILL PASSED THE SENATE UNCHANGED FROM THE VERSION PRESENTED BY THE ADMINISTRATION AND IT IS VIRUTALLY CERTAIN IT WILL BECOME LAW LATER THIS YEAR. WE TRANSMITTED THE TEXT OF THE BILL IN OUR AIRGRAM A-41 OF FEB 16, 1973.

5. THERE FOLLOW SUMMARIES ON NARCOTICS CASES IN COLOMBIA DURING MARCH:

(A) ON MARCH 1, 1973 IN MEDELLIN, THE CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT (DECIPOL) APPREHENDED ONE SUBJECT IN POSSESSION OF COCAINE. THE FIRST REPORTS FROM MEDELLIN INDICATED THIS SUBJECT WAS IN POSSESSION OF TEN POUNDS COCAINE AT THE TIME OF APPREHENSION AND HAD GIVEN INFORMATION ON THE LOCATION OF A COCAINE LABORATORY. HE REPORTEDLY ALSO IMPLICATED PROMINENT BUSINESSMEN, GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND DIPLOMATS IN THE NET. NIGHT AFTER APPREHENSION WAS MADE, CHIEF OF DECIPOL LAB, WHO PLAYED AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE PRELIMINARY ARREST AND INVESTIGATION, WAS FIRED AT THREE TIMES. LATER NEWS-PAPER REPORTS STATED FIVE POUNDS OF COCAINE HAD BEEN CONFISCATED. AT THIS TIME RELIABLE SOURCES INDICATE THE AMOUNT OFFICIALLY REPORTED AS BEING CONFISCATED IS 500 GRAMS AND THAT NO LAB WAS DISCOVERED. THERE HAS BEEN NO FURTHER INFORMATION CONCERNING THE PROMINENT PERSONAGES SUPPOSEDLY INVOLVED IN THIS CASE.

(B) ON MARCH 3, COLOMBIAN CUSTOMS FOUND AND SEIZED 560 POUNDS MARIJUANA AT THE BARRANQUILLA AIRPORT.

(C) ON MARCH 2, NATIONAL POLICE APPREHENDED TWO SUBJECTS IN BOGOTA IN POSSESSION OF ONE KILO COCAINE.

(D) ON MARCH 4, NATIONAL POLICE RECOVERED 50 KILOS MARIJAUNA FROM A U. S. PRIVATE AIRCRAFT WHICH CRASHED NEAR MALAMBO, COLOMBIA. ONE AMERICAN WAS ARRESTED. ON MARCH 8, FOUR COLOMBIAN MALES WERE CONFIDENTIAL

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ARRESTED BY NATIONAL POLICE WHO WERE INVOLVED IN THIS INDCIDENT

AND TWO WERE FOUND IN POSSESSION OF MARIJUANA.

(E) ON MARCH 4 IN A SUBURB OF POPAYAN, NATIONAL POLICE APPREHENDED FIVE SUBJECT TRAVELLING IN A TAXI IN POSSESSION OF 200 POUNDS MARIJUANA.

(F) ON MARCH 10 IN TOMA RATON, RIOHACHA NATIONAL POLICE CONFISCATED 200 POUNDS MARIJUANA ON A RANCH. THERE WERE NO ARRESTS.

(G) ON MARCH 12 IN SAN JUAN DE ARMA, NATIONAL POLICE APPREHENDED TWO SUBJECTS IN POSSESSION OF APPROXIMATELY 5,000 POUNDS MARIJUANA.

(H) ON MARCH 13, IN RIOHACHA, NATIONAL POLICE ARRESTED TWO SUBJECTS IN POSSESSION OF 300 POUNDS MARIJUANA.

(I) ON MARCH 14, NATIONAL POLICE APPREHENDED A FRENCH FEMALE IN BOGOTA IN POSSESSION OF AN UNDERTERMINED AMOUNT OF COCAINE AND MORPHINE ALONG WITH TWO SACKS AND 14,800 PESOS. INVESTIGATION CONTINUES.

(J) ON MARCH 15, NATIONAL POLICE CONFISCATED, IN BOGOTA, 1,000 POUNDS OF MARIJUANA THAT HAD BEEN ABANDONED.

(D) ON MARCH 16 IN SANTA MARTA, NATIONAL POLICE APPREHENDED THREE SUBJECTS IN POSSESSION OF APPROXIMATELY 100 POUNDS MARIJUANA.

(L) ON MARCH 16 IN MEDELLIN, DECIPOL APPREHENDED THREE SUBJECTS IN POSSESSION OF 325 POUNDS MARIJUANA.

(M) ON MARCH 17 IN MEDELLIN, DECIPOL APPREHENDED TWO SUBJECTS IN POSSESSION OF 200 POUNDS MARIJUANA .

(N) ON MARCH 19 NATIONAL POLICE APPREHENDED THREE SUBJECTS IN POSSESSION OF TWO KILOS OF COCAINE AND APPROXIMATELY 60 POUNDS OF REFINED MARIJUANA. MISSION BNDD AGENTS ASSISTED ON THIS CASE.

5. THERE FOLLOW SUMMARIES ON ARRESTS OF COLOMBIAN ABROAD WHICH HAVE BEEN TAKEN FROM OFFICIAL TELEGRAPHIC TRAFFIC. THERE IS EVERY REASON TO BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT THIS IS NOT A COMPLETE LIST:

(A) ON MARCH 2, TWO COLOMBIAN MALES WERE ARRESTED IN QUEENS, NY BY BNDD/ CUSTOMS OFFICIALS IN POSSESSION OF 1500 POUNDS MARIJUANA.

(B) ON MARCH 11, FIVE SUBJECTS WERE ARRESTED IN MIAMI BY CUSTOMS OFFICIALS. OF THE FIVE ARRESTED, FOUR WERE COLOMBIAN CITIZENS.

(C) ON MARCH 20, ONE COLOMBIAN MALE WAS ARRESTED AND THREE KILOS OF SUSPECTED COCAINE WERE SEIZED IN MEXICO.

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